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INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENTAL  
STUDIES

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

**NOISE**

beverly hills  
general plan

8-75








Note: On November 4, 1975, by Resolution No. 75-R-5345, the Beverly Hills City Council adopted pages 1 through 18 of this document.

#### NOISE ELEMENT ABSTRACT

1. Impetus: State requirement.
2. Existing Situation.
  - 2.1. No ambient noise levels are in excess of those considered problematic to people.
  - 2.2. Noise levels are generally moderate.
  - 2.3. Noise levels are directly correlated with vehicular traffic, and, therefore, areas adjoining major streets have considerably higher ambient noise levels than others.
  - 2.4. Noise levels vary during the time of day; ambient noise levels at night are much lower.
3. Existing Policies: City Ordinances 71-0-1403 and 71-0-1453 make excessive and/or disturbing noises illegal. These are now enforced.
4. Problems.
  - 4.1. There are no noise levels in excess of health standards.
  - 4.2. Noise from vehicles is a major concern.
5. Proposed Solutions.\*
  - 5.1. Continue efforts to discourage through traffic on residential streets.
  - 5.2. Consider construction of "soundwalls" along major streets.
  - 5.3. Continue to enforce noise ordinances.
  - 5.4. Lend support to other agencies concerned with noise abatement.
6. Environmental Impacts (i.e., impacts if Element were implemented). An EIR was developed that concluded that there would be two major impacts, but that the chances of either being implemented were questionable, those associated with the:
  - 6.1. Development of "soundwalls,"
  - 6.2. Discouraging through traffic in residential areas.

*Beverly Hills Dept. of pl.  
City pl.      Bev Hills  
" " Noise abatement*

\* As with any specialized study, the recommendations must be considered in terms of their priorities relative to other municipal projects competing for the City's attention and financial resources.



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## 1. INTRODUCTION.

### 1.1. Purposes of Element.

This document is one of the nine State-required elements that must be included in the General Plans of all jurisdictions in California. It is supposed to serve two purposes:

- . To guide decision makers relative to policy matters associated with noise and "noise pollution;" and
- . To provide decision makers and the public with accurate data on noise within the jurisdiction.

The document follows the format suggested by the State and is intended to fulfill the requirements of the State law.

Many development decisions have been made that affect noise levels in Beverly Hills and other communities without considering how they might affect existing noise levels and how noises would affect them. This Element is designed to abate this problem by providing data with which members of the City Council, City Commissions, staff, and the general public can evaluate matters related to noise and by establishing a policy and direction regarding noise that is appropriate to Beverly Hills.

Many sources of noise and sound within an urban area cannot be controlled by a City. Noises associated with transportation -- airplanes, autos, etc. -- tend to be under the authority of Federal and State governments. However, in some cases the cities do have the authority to regulate noise sources.

This study is intended to be general in nature and, therefore, does not amount to a document that can be used to comply with Title 25, Chapter 1, Subchapter 1, New Article 4, New Section 1092 of the California Administrative Code.

A glossary of terms appears in Section 4.

### 1.2. Objectives of Element.

- . To reduce noises from motor vehicles;
- . To insure that future modes of transportation or new versions of existing modes meet acceptable noise levels;
- . To provide a basis for noise evaluations which might be needed in conjunction with land use and construction matters and environmental impact report/studies;
- . To create a greater awareness of the noise-associated problems among the public and elected officials and to provide guidance as to how they might be resolved; and
- . To work jointly with appropriate agencies and/or jurisdictions to mitigate any noise problems in Beverly Hills.



## 2. PLAN.

### 2.1. Existing Situation.

As discussed in depth in Section 3. of this document, while no ambient noise level in Beverly Hills is in excess of that considered problematic to people, City noise levels are moderate. They are directly correlated with vehicular traffic, and, therefore, areas adjoining major streets have considerably higher ambient noise levels than others. Noise levels vary during the time of day; ambient noise levels at night are considerably lower than those during the day in Beverly Hills.

### 2.2. Existing Policies.

The City has adopted several policies on noise and acceptable noise levels that have been compiled in Ordinances 71-O-1403 (adopted August, 1970; revised September, 1970) and 72-O-1453 (adopted and revised in October, 1972). These policies include the following:

#### 2.2.1. General. The City should take steps to:

- prohibit unnecessary, excessive, and annoying noise levels from all sources;
- curtail noise levels that are detrimental to the health and welfare of the citizenry;
- prosecute any person found guilty of causing excessive noise pursuant to the following factors:
  - the volume of noise;
  - the intensity of the noise;
  - whether the nature of the noise is usual or unusual;
  - whether the origin of the noise is natural or unnatural;
  - the volume and intensity of the background noise, if any;
  - the proximity of the noise to residential sleeping facilities;
  - the nature and zoning of the area within which the noise emanates;
  - the density of the inhabitation of the area within which the noise emanates;
  - the time of the day or night the noise occurs;
  - the duration of the noise;
  - whether the noise is recurrent, intermittent, or constant; and/or
  - whether the noise is produced by a commercial or noncommercial activity.

#### 2.2.2. Vehicles.

It is unlawful to:

- operate any motor vehicle within the City so as to cause discomfort or annoyance; and/or
- repair, rebuild, or test any motor vehicle in such a manner as to cause discomfort to any person within a residential area of the City.



### 2.2.3. Railroads.

Operation of a railroad horn which is in excess of 89 decibels at a point 300 feet or more from the source is prohibited between the hours of 10:00 P.M. of one day and 7:00 A.M. of the next day.

### 2.2.4. Construction.

In Beverly Hills, it is against the law to operate equipment or perform any outside construction or repair work on any building, structure, pneumatic hammer, derrick, steam or electric hoist, or other construction type device, between the hours of 6:00 P.M. of one day and 8:00 A.M. of the next day, or at any time on any public holiday so as to cause discomfort or annoyance in a residential zone, unless beforehand a permit therefor has been obtained.

### 2.2.5. Special Sources.

It is illegal to:

- use or operate any radio receiving set, musical instrument, phonograph, television set, etc., between the hours of 10:00 P.M. of one day and 7:00 A.M. of the following day in a residential area to disturb the peace, quiet, and comfort of neighboring residents;
- exceed the ambient noise level at the property line of any property (or, if a condominium or apartment house, within any adjoining apartment) by more than five decibels;
- sell anything by public outcry within any area of the City zoned for residential uses;\*
- use any drum, other percussion or musical instrument, or device of any kind for the purpose of attracting attention by the creation of noise within the City;\*
- create any noise on any street, sidewalk or public place adjacent to any school, institution of learning, or church while the same is in use or adjacent to any hospital which noise unreasonably interferes with the workings of such institution or which disturbs or unduly annoys patients in the hospital;
- keep or maintain any animal or fowl which, by any sound, cry, or behavior shall cause annoyance or discomfort; and/or
- operate any machinery, equipment, pump, fan air-conditioning apparatus, or similar mechanical device in any manner so as to create any noise which would cause the noise level at the property line of any property to exceed the ambient noise level by more than five decibels.

### 2.3. Standards.

This section describes two sets of standards that are most applicable to the concerns of Beverly Hills, given the situation described in Section 2.1. In addition to these, there are other standards that have not been enumerated as they do not directly affect Beverly Hills because the:

\* Certain modifications to this are noted in Ordinance 71-0-1403.



- City does not contain certain facilities (e.g., airports, heliports, rapid transit, etc.); or
- standards are directed at manufacturers or developers and are related to the performance of certain products (e.g., sound generated by home appliances, etc.).

### 2.3.1. For City Noises.

Actual standards have not been developed regarding noises in Beverly Hills. However, the City Ordinances on noise imply policies and standards: That the ambient noise levels within Beverly Hills should not be increased by additional specific noise sources. (Ambient noise levels in Beverly Hills are plotted on Maps 2 through 5 in Section 3.0.)

### 2.3.2. For Motor Vehicles.

In order to curtail excessive noises and to create a healthy environment, the California Department of Motor Vehicles established the following standards effective January 1, 1973. These are based on measurements approximately 50 feet from the center of the roadway:

TABLE 1

#### California Department of Motor Vehicles Noise Standards (in dB(A))

Type of Vehicle	Vehicle Speed (in mph)	
	Below 35 mph	Above 35 mph
Any with a manufacturer's gross vehicle weight rating of 6,000 lbs. or more, and any combination thereof towed by such motor vehicle	86	90
Motorcycles, other than motor-drive cycle	82	86
Others or any combination thereof towed by such	76	82

Source: California Department of Motor Vehicles, 1973.

Section 27160 governing the sale of new motor vehicles sets the following standards under test procedures established by the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Under this section of the Vehicle Code, by 1988, all vehicles sold in California will have to meet the 70-decibel standard.



TABLE 2

1988 California Department of Motor Vehicles Noise Standards (in dB(A))

Vehicle	Maximum Permitted Noise
Vehicle weighing 6,000 lbs. or more	
• Mfd. before 1975	86
Mfd. after 1974 and before 1978	83
Mfd. after 1977 and before 1988	80
Mfd. after 1987	70
Motorcycle	
Mfd. before 1975	86
Mfd. after 1974 and before 1968	80
Mfd. after 1977 and before 1988	75
Mfd. after 1987	70
Other vehicle	
Mfd. before 1975	84
Mfd. after 1974 and before 1978	80
Mfd. after 1977 and before 1988	75
Mfd. after 1987	70

Source: California Department of Motor Vehicles.

2.4. Enumeration of Problems.

Beverly Hills has no noise levels which are in excess of health standards. Further, there are no noise sources that generate "unhealthy" noise levels on a regular or even infrequent basis. However, there is one major noise concern, and it will be discussed here: noise generated by vehicles, especially on major streets.

As noted in Section 3.3.3., and on Maps 1 through 4, the highest noise levels in Beverly Hills are those which occur along major streets and are generated by vehicular traffic. These noise levels are significantly greater than those in residential and even commercial neighborhoods adjoining these major streets. For example, only during the "noon period"\* did the noise levels in the Business Triangle approximate those taken along the entire length of Wilshire Boulevard in Beverly Hills.

If noises from vehicles could be better controlled, the major source of noises in Beverly Hills could be mitigated, and, consequently, the environment of the entire City would be improved.

\* "Noon period" is defined as 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

## 2.5. Policies, Programs to Mitigate Noise Problem.

This section proposes a strategy which addresses the major issues and which recognizes practical limitations by which excessive noise could be mitigated in Beverly Hills. As with any specialized study, the recommendations must be considered in terms of their priority relative to other municipal projects competing for the City's attention and financial resources.

### 2.5.1. Continue Efforts to Discourage Through Traffic on Residential Streets.

As traffic volumes build, through traffic seeks alternative ways to bypass the major through streets. Although some relief may be temporarily provided, it is done at the expense of the residential streets which begins to function as traffic relievers.

Unless the issues underlying the need for traffic relievers is addressed, the problem simply continues to grow and the residential streets are sacrificed for no particular benefit.

As was pointed out in the proposal to discourage through traffic from residential streets on the South of Wilshire area, there are trade-offs which must be considered. Since traffic problems are not being solved by indiscriminate use of City streets for through traffic, it is believed to be extremely important to confine through traffic to certain streets and to continue efforts to solve traffic problems rather than to disperse them.

Since noise is directly related to traffic, and traffic noise is the major noise source in the City, it is believed that this recommendation, if implemented, would serve to protect those areas most vulnerable to the adverse effects of noise.

This is now being studied by the Traffic & Parking Commission as part of the Master Plan of Streets.

### 2.5.2. Construction of "Soundwalls" Along Major Streets.

#### 2.5.2.1. General.

Pre-cast block "Soundwalls" have been successfully constructed along freeways in Southern California but not along arterial streets.<sup>a/</sup>

These walls cost about \$100 per linear foot, are from 10 to 14 feet high and about eight inches thick.<sup>b/</sup> The walls lower the decibel readings in the adjoining area by about 15 points.

a/ Soundwalls may be seen along the San Bernardino Freeway (Interstate 10) near the Baldwin Avenue off-ramp (El Monte) and near the Grandview Avenue off-ramp of the Pomona Freeway (State Route 60) in the City of Montebello.

b/ Theoretically they could be four inches thick; the blocks are made at the wider thickness and thus are used by CALTRANS.



Currently, additional materials are being tested for use as "soundwalls". Plastic strips in chain link fences were determined by CALTRANS to be unsatisfactory because they cracked; now, the State is testing plexiglass walls, which are easier to install and cost less to purchase than the blocks.

In order to be effective, soundwalls cannot be "broken" or "interrupted". If they were, the noise would penetrate the neighborhood at these points. Hence, installations becomes problematic in an urban area such as Beverly Hills with a grid pattern.

#### 2.5.2.2. As Applicable to Beverly Hills.

It is evident that due to the size and constraints which govern effective soundwalls, this offers a rather limited solution to the problem. The use of soundwalls within the City may be applicable to such areas in which the noise is considered excessive (the State is using a figure of 70 decibels as the basis for constructing soundwalls between freeways and adjacent residential areas) and the soundwall can be constructed in a manner which will be compatible with the surrounding area, so that the solution is not worse than the problem. The use of soundwalls may be appropriate if they can be integrated as part of structures.

The City currently requires that the walls of parking garages adjacent to residential areas be acoustically treated (Sec.10-3.2633). There may be other instances in which such multiple purpose designs may be appropriate.

They may also be used in conjunction with a program to segregate residential traffic from commercial traffic, as is being studied as part of the South of Wilshire Circulation Study. In this instance, such soundwalls may be built and landscaped at the end of cul-de-sacs so as to provide a physical as well as noise barrier between areas.

#### 2.5.3. Enforcement of Vehicle Noise Emission Standards.

The Beverly Hills Police Department is responsible for enforcement of noise emission standards for all vehicles using City streets. Currently, about one citation per day is issued for violations of this nature.

#### 2.5.4. Enforcement of Noise Ordinances.

As vehicular noises increase, the City's role in enforcement of local ordinances, especially those which require noise insulation of interior structures from exterior noise, will become progressively more important. City staff is cognizant of this responsibility.



#### 2.5.5. Regulation of Emergency Sirens.

Since the purpose of emergency sirens is to be heard above all else, they are designed to be annoying. Obviously, they would be used as sparingly as possible. State law requires that emergency sirens be at least 90 decibels at 100 feet. Some communities favor the werbling type since they are louder and presumably more effective. Beverly Hills Fire and Police Departments favor this type of siren.

#### 2.5.6. Lend Support to Other Agencies Concerned with Noise Abatement.

On an ongoing basis, the City can coordinate its efforts and lend its support to those regional, state and federal agencies responsible for the development of standards, regulation and enforcement. In addition, we should seek opportunities to influence the development of uniform standards throughout the region and endorse efforts to promote new technologies.

Since many of the vehicles which traverse the City are publicly owned, we should encourage high standards for performance wherever possible. To the extent practicable, manufacturers of vehicles owned by the Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD) or the 300 vehicles owned by the City should be encouraged to be pacesetters in the reduction of noise emissions.



### 3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION.

#### 3.1. Basic Data.

The following should be considered when reviewing this section:

- noise readings were taken at specific sites; these readings were generalized to extend across similar areas: the readings are considered to be similar along the same street or in the same general area (given similar vehicular traffic and land use activity patterns).
- noise levels decrease with increased distance from the noise source; in many cases, this "fall off" is very rapid, especially if the noise source is "blocked" by structures or plants, etc.
- as a practical matter, it should be remembered that noise is a factor insofar as it is perceived by the human ear; if the noise reading area is a residential district with homes set back from the street and few pedestrians, it tends to be perceived very differently from an area where people congregate. For example, while in fact less noisy, people may perceive Wilshire Boulevard as more noisy than Sunset Boulevard simply because they walk, shop, and work in the area and the area is confined by structures and contains vehicles. The result is that more people are directly affected and perceive the noise level as greater.
- noise readings are composed of generalized "background" sounds and sounds related to specific sources such as vehicles. As "background" sounds decrease at night, specific noise sources increase relatively; and vice versa.

#### 3.2. Procedures.

The Department of City Planning took noise-level readings at 69 points within the City of Beverly Hills to develop the State-required noise contours. The sites were selected because of their generic qualities relative to their:

- central location within a well-defined area or district of the City and/or
- location along major streets or in other areas of expected high noise generation.

These sites are plotted on Map 5.

Noise readings were taken during four time periods. This procedure led to the development of four contour maps because the intensity and contour distribution varied at different times during the day. Readings were taken during:

- mid-morning (9:30 A.M. to 11:30 A.M.);
- noon (11:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M.);
- "rush hour" (3:45 P.M. to 5:30 P.M.); and
- evening (7:00 P.M. to 9:30 P.M.).





# NOISE CONTOURS: MID-MORNING

JANUARY 1975





# NOISE CONTOURS: NOON

JANUARY 1975

Benedict Cañon

Coldwater Cañon

Sunset

Wilshire

Santa Monica

Olympic

Burton Way

La Cienega  
San Vicente

Beverly

Doheny

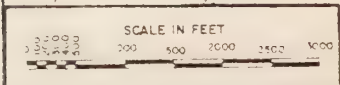
Robertson

City of Beverly Hills

## LEGEND

Below 60 dB(A)	
60 - 64 dB(A)	
65 - 69 dB(A)	
70 - 74 dB(A)	
75 - 79 dB(A)	

SOURCE: Beverly Hills Department of City Planning.





# NOISE CONTOURS: RUSH HOUR

JANUARY 1975





# NOISE CONTOURS: EVENING

JANUARY 1975

Benedict Cañon

Coldwater Cañon

Sunset

Wilshire

Santa Monica

Olympic

Burton Way

La Cienega  
San Vicente

Beverly

Doheny

Robertson

City of Beverly Hills

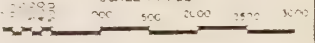
## LEGEND

Below 60 dB(A)	
60 - 64 dB(A)	
65 - 69 dB(A)	
70 - 74 dB(A)	
75 - 79 dB(A)	

SOURCE: Beverly Hills Department of City Planning.



SCALE IN FEET



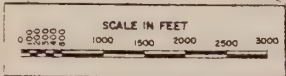


# NOISE READING SITES

## STREET MAP OF THE CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
EDWARD E. TUFFE GEORGE DE CHELLIS  
PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR CHIEF ENGINEER

1979







Readings were taken in decibels (A scale) (dB (A)). The A scale was used because it most reflects noise as perceived by the human ear.

Five 1-minute readings were taken at each site during each of the four periods of the day. Within each period, these five readings were averaged and a mean was developed. This mean was used in preparing the contour maps.

### 3.3. Data from Noise Readings/Contour Maps.

#### 3.3.1. Relatively Low Noise Levels.

Relative to other urban areas, Beverly Hills has low levels of noise. The highest readings taken were 79 dB(A)s and these occurred in the area near:

- Sunset Boulevard and Canon Drive during "noon;"
- Santa Monica Boulevard near the Beverly Hilton Hotel during "rush hour;"
- Beverly Drive and Olympic Boulevard during "rush hour;" and
- La Cienega Boulevard south of Wilshire Boulevard during "rush hour."

Other relatively high noise readings were taken at the following sites:

- 78 dB(A)s:
  - Benedict Canon Drive at Leona Drive during "noon;" and
  - Wilshire Boulevard at Bedford Drive during "rush hour."
- 77 dB(A)s:
  - Sunset Boulevard at Canon Drive during "mid-morning;"
  - Santa Monica Boulevard at Bedford Drive during "mid-morning;"
  - Elevado and Doheny Drives during "noon;"
  - Wilshire Boulevard and Bedford Drive during "noon;" and
  - Benedict Canon and Leona Drive during "evening."

Given its urban nature, all Beverly Hills readings are relatively low. Within Los Angeles City, for example, noise readings taken were as high as 90 dB(A)s.

### 3.3.2. Noise Levels Within "Health Limits."

As the Figure shows, physical discomfort occurs at about 100 dB(A)s. No Beverly Hills noise readings approximate this figure. Hence, noise levels throughout Beverly Hills do not adversely affect good health. (See Figure.)

### 3.3.3. Noise Levels Positively Correlated with Vehicular Traffic.

The parcels abutting streets which have the heaviest traffic loads tend to have the highest noise levels. The correlation is not perfect: Streets with the greatest traffic counts do not necessarily have the highest noise readings; nevertheless, the general correlation is valid and may be clearly seen on the contour maps.

The following streets have high noise readings: Coldwater Canon, Beverly, and Doheny Drives and La Cienega, Sunset, Santa Monica, Wilshire, and Olympic Boulevards.

The Table below illustrates this correlation. The streets with the highest noise readings are shown; the streets with the highest traffic counts are cited also.

TABLE 3

Streets with Highest Traffic Counts and Their Noise Readings\*

Street	General Traffic Count (ADT)	General Noise Reading in dB(A)
Wilshire Boulevard	51,000	75
Olympic Boulevard	44,000	77
Santa Monica Boulevard	42,000	76
La Cienega Boulevard	38,900	79
Sunset Boulevard	35,800	73

Sources: Beverly Hills Departments of City Planning and Traffic & Parking, January, 1975  
Compiled by Beverly Hills Department of City Planning.

\* Noise readings and traffic counts have been generalized, i.e., an average for the entire street has been developed. Specific noise readings appear in Appendix.

### 3.3.4. Noise Levels/Contours Vary During Day.

Noise levels vary during the day. As a result, the controur pattern also varies, and in a manner one might expect. During the time of greatest traffic loads, the noise levels are the highest; during the evening, when traffic is less, noise levels are lower.

The relative variation in noise levels is great in many areas. Table 4 illustrates this.



TABLE 4

Variation in Noise Levels, Selected Sites\*

Site	"Midmorning"	"Noon"	"Rush Hour"	"Evening"	Variation (Hi - Lo)
Loma Vista Drive and Drury Lane	73	71	72	58	15
Lexington Drive and Hartford Road	52	70	61	75	23
Bedford Drive and Brighton Way	74	74	73	60	14
Canon Drive near Gregory Way	71	66	61	49	22
Beverly Green and Spalding Drives	63	63	62	50	13

Source: Beverly Hills Department of City Planning, January, 1975.

\* Complete noise readings for all sites and all time periods appear in the Appendix.

The noise variation seems to be especially pronounced in residential areas which have high traffic levels during the day. These include the area south of the Business Triangle and that adjoining Beverly, Canon, and Coldwater Canon Drives north of Santa Monica Boulevard.

Noise readings along major streets are relatively consistent during the day and this is reflected on the following Table:

TABLE 5

Noise Readings Along Major Streets, Selected Sites\*

Site	"Midmorning"	"Noon"	"Rush Hour"	"Evening"	Variation (Hi - Lo)
Sunset Boulevard and Bedford Drive	75	76	71	75	4
Wilshire and Santa Monica Boulevards	71	71	76	71	5
Wilshire and San Vicente Boulevards	71	76	76	75	4
Santa Monica Boulevard and Doheny Drive	72	75	74	70	5
Olympic Boulevard and Beverly Drive	72	74	79	70	9

Source: Beverly Hills Department of City Planning, January, 1975.

\* Complete noise readings for all sites (including those along major streets) and all time periods appear in the Appendix.

Because of these fluctuations, the contour pattern does change during the day, even though it remains basically the same, that is, the parcels abutting major streets tend to remain "noisier" than others, however, within that general framework, there is alteration: For example, the noise contours pattern in the:

- Residential area between Sunset and Santa Monica Boulevards changes dramatically;
- Business Triangle and surrounding areas fluctuates.

### 3.3.5. Industrial Area Very "Quiet."

The light industrial area of Beverly Hills is relatively "quiet." Noise readings during "midmorning" when they ought to be the highest -- were only 57 dB(A)s. In Los Angeles County, readings of 67 dB(A)s are common in industrial areas.\*

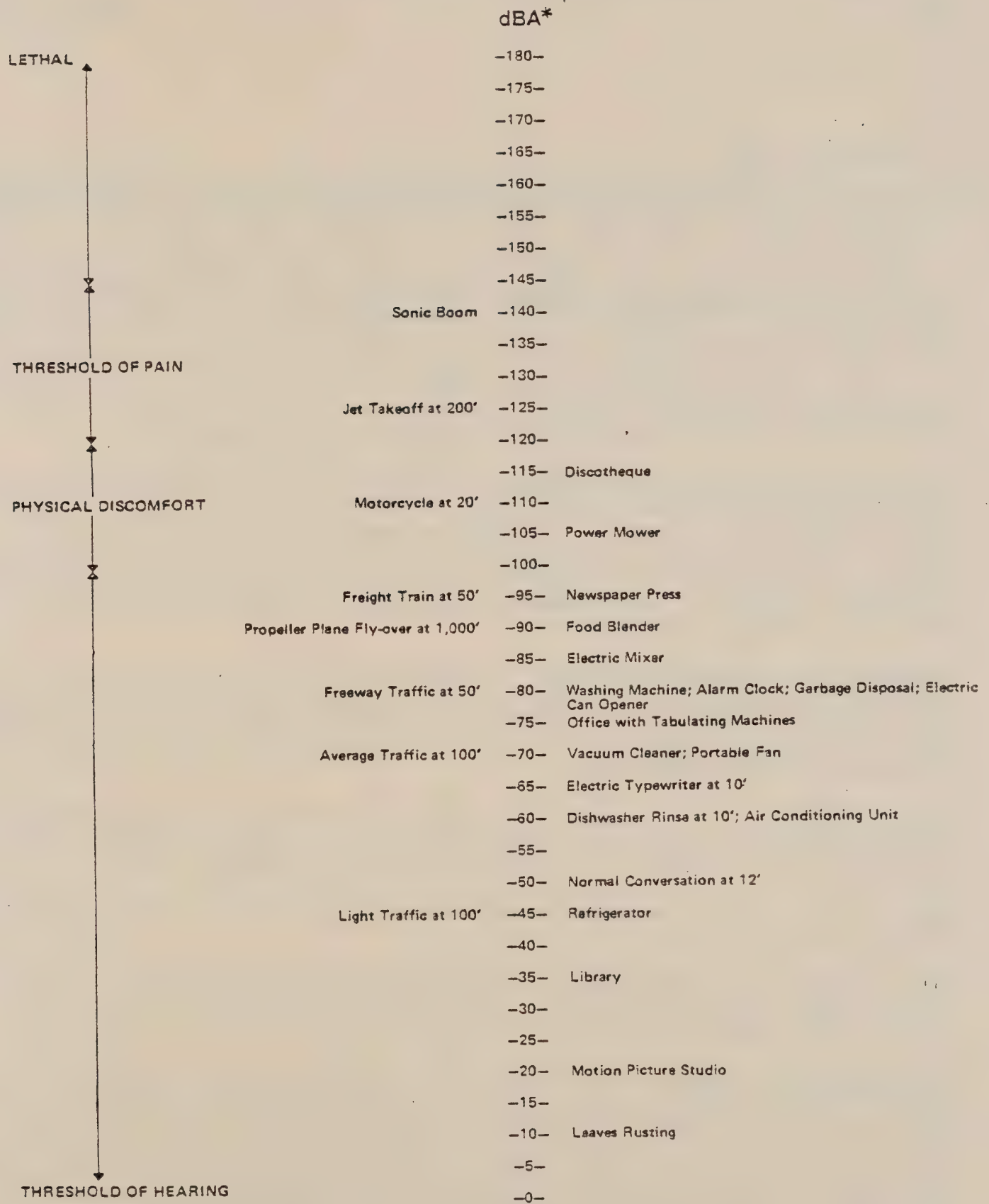
### 3.3.6. Railroad Noise Infrequent But Significant.

Although relatively infrequent, railroad service to Beverly Hills is a source of significant noise. The frequency of rail service and, therefore, the noises generated from it vary pursuant to the demands of the establishments in the industrial areas. Rail noises in Beverly Hills are typically 88 dB(A)s at 50 feet. Noise levels are relatively low because the railroads move at a slow rate of speed in Beverly Hills. A substantial portion of rail service occurs during the evening or nighttime when "background" noise levels are lower, thus, noises generated are perceived as greater.

\* An increase of 10 dB is perceived as two times as much noise to the human ear.



## ACOUSTICAL SCALE



\* The unit of sound is the decibel (dB). The loudness of sound is typically measured using a sound meter, the A-Scale of which corresponds closely to the way the human ear perceives sound.<sup>2</sup> Thus the sound level for noise evaluations is frequently expressed in dBA.

#### 4. GLOSSARY OF TERMS.\*

Ambient Noise - The level of noise that is all-encompassing within a given environment, being usually a composite of sounds from many and varied sources near to and far from the observer. No specific source is identified in the ambient.

Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) - The CNEL in dB(A) is the adjusted noise exposure level for a 24-hour day. It is a noise measurement scale which accounts for noise source, distance, single event duration, single event occurrence frequency, and time of day. It is a combination of separate daytime, evening, and nighttime equivalent noise levels with weighting factors applied to evening and nighttime values. The adjustment approximately accounts for the lower tolerance of people to noise during the evening and nighttime periods relative to the daytime period.

A-Weighted Sound Pressure Level (dB(A)) - A method of sound measurement which assigns weighted values to selected frequency bands in an attempt to reflect electronically how the ear responds to sound. The A-Weighted Sound Pressure Level (dB(A)) is a quantity in decibels read from a standard sound level meter that is switched to the weighting network labeled "A." The "A" weighting network discriminates against lower frequencies according to a relationship approximating the auditory sensitivity of the human ear at moderate sound levels.

Day-Night Average Sound Level (Ldn) - A combination of daytime and nighttime "A" weighted noise levels with the nighttime values weighted further to account for the lower tolerance of people to noise during the nighttime period relative to daytime period. Ldn is approximately 1/2 dB lower than the estimated CNEL value, and can be considered synonymous with CNEL.

Noise Attenuation - The attenuation of a material substance or medium refers to its ability to reduce the noise level (acoustic) from one position to another. Noise attenuation can be specified, in decibels, as a noise transmission loss.

Noise Contours - A line connecting equal levels of noise intensity as measured on a particular scale as dB(A).

Noise Impacted Area - Area affected by unusually high levels of noise. Generally, a criterion level is stated in decibels which has been weighted for frequency and time, e.g., 120 dB(A), CNEL 65, Ldn 65.

Noise Sensitive Land Uses - The more sensitive land uses include: residential, schools, libraries, churches, hospitals, auditoriums and outdoor recreation areas. These typify land uses whose suitability is restricted by intrusive noise, hence are termed "noise sensitive." Noise sensitivity factors include: interference with speech communication; subjective judgments of noise acceptability and relative noisiness; need for freedom from noise intrusion; and sleep interference criteria. Also considered are noise complaint history and compatible building construction.

\* Source: County of Los Angeles, Preliminary Noise Element, 1974.



Performance Standards, Noise - Measured criteria for maximum emission of noise from a source. Noise performance standards for stationary land uses are usually applied at the lot line.

Statistical Level (L50) - The L50 statistical noise level is exceeded 50 percent of the time during which the measurement was made.

## 5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT.

### 5.1. Introduction.

As of December 17, 1973, all general plan elements that are to be individually adopted must have an environmental impact report as part of the adoption process. This action was taken pursuant to Division 13, Chapter 2.6, Section 21083 of the Public Resource Code. This portion of the document, therefore, analyzes the environmental impacts that are likely to occur if the Noise Element were implemented.

### 5.2. Project Description.

#### 5.2.1. General.

The Noise Element identifies the existing noise levels and sources of noise in Beverly Hills; it evaluates these noise sources and general ambient noise levels to determine whether they are unhealthy or dysfunctional to the citizens; and it includes recommendations for action and policy development that would, if implemented improve the environment by mitigating noise levels in the City.

If adopted, the Element would be incorporated into the City of Beverly Hills General Plan. Therefore, it would serve as a data source and tool to evaluate and/or strive to reduce noise levels in the City for elected officials, commissions, staff, and members of the public.

#### 5.2.2. Present Program.

The City has enacted two ordinances which address noise. These are currently being enforced and have had an impact upon Beverly Hills. In addition, because of recent alterations of State Law, a Noise Element is now required for each jurisdiction within the State.

This Element should also include analysis of the extant City policies and actions to mitigate adverse impacts of noise.

The Noise Element should be evaluated in a specific manner; that is, data, actions, and policies related to noise should be enumerated and developed. In addition, the Element must be reviewed relative to other Elements of the General Plan and the totality of the General Plan. This must be done for two reasons: first, noise is related to other factors which are discussed in other elements, e.g., transportation, land use, and housing; and a unified strategy ought to be developed with which to deal with the City's problems. This is especially significant if City monies are to be expended.

#### 5.2.3. Future Programs.

The City has undertaken noise readings and studies; it would be well to consider updating these periodically so that the Element continues to be usable. Data generated



from the updated noise readings could be transferred to the Land Use Computer File now being developed by the Department of City Planning and the Processing Service Bureau.

#### 5.2.4. Methodology.

In preparing the Element, the following steps were taken:

- noise-level readings were developed; and they were related to a map;
- analysis of the noise-level readings led to the citation of the problem areas;
- literature was reviewed and analysis was made in order to propose solutions to the problem; and
- literature was reviewed and analysis was made in order to cite possible future problems and methods and policies available to mitigate against their development.

### 5.3. Environmental Setting.

#### 5.3.1. General.

The Environmental Setting of this EIR was discussed in the Environmental Setting Report, published on March , 1975, by the City of Beverly Hills. This report deals with a variety of physical and social factors that influence the environment. In addition to that, the following information on noise is relevant.

As in most jurisdictions, the major source of noises in Beverly Hills is related to the transportation system; however, unlike many cities, Beverly Hills does not have certain noise sources which tend to generate significant amounts of sound: airports, heliports, fixed-rail rapid transit, heavy industry, and seaports. Not only are these noise sources nonexistent in Beverly Hills, but the secondary effects of them on the City are minimal: flight patterns, for example, tend to bypass Beverly Hills and airplanes only occasionally increase ambient noise levels.

Vehicular traffic on major streets is the primary cause of noise in Beverly Hills. Those parcels closest to the noise source are most affected; parcels further away from major streets are significantly "quieter." Noise levels fluctuate during the day; ambient noises at night -- when vehicular traffic is less -- are considerably lower. While moderate, all noise levels in Beverly Hills are far less than those which approach "unhealthy" conditions. (See Figure

#### 5.3.2. Effects of Noise on Health and Hearing.\*

A major emphasis of the Noise Element and of this EIR is the protection of the public health and hearing.

\* Excerpts from City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning, Proposed Final Environmental Impact Report, Proposed Noise Element, City of Los Angeles, February, 1975, p. 13 ff.

In the past, the main concern with noise and its effects on hearing has been relative to occupational safety. More recently, studies have indicated that noise can contribute to psychological and physiological problems. In their report on noise to the President and Congress, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency states:

"...It has been long known that noise of sufficient intensity and duration can induce temporary or permanent hearing loss, ranging from slight impairment to nearly total deafness. In general, any source of sound producing noise levels of 70 to 80 dBa at the ear can contribute to a pattern of exposure that may produce temporary hearing threshold shifts if exposure is long enough, and this in turn could lead to permanent hearing impairment. In addition, noise can interfere with speech communication and the perception of other auditory signals, disrupt sleep and relaxation, be a source of annoyance, interfere with an individual's ability to perform complicated tasks, influence mood, and otherwise detract from the quality of life."\*

Additional evidence on the effects of noise can be found in medical and psychological journals. In addition, the Environmental Protection Agency has held public hearings on noise abatement and control. The transcript of their hearings, the "Physiological and Psychological Effects" of noise provides expert testimony on the adverse effect of noise.

Of concern in this Element is the effect on human activity. The intent is to provide land use criteria and mitigating measures to minimize the adverse effects of noise within the City. Through proper community and site planning, many noise problems can be partially overcome.

The following figure illustrates the levels of noise emanating from typical noise sources; and it cites where noise can be detrimental to health. (See Figure.)

Various guidelines are available which are directed toward prevention of hearing loss due to exposure to steady noise. Current occupational noise exposure control guidelines are primarily aimed at protecting hearing in a restricted range of frequency critical to understanding speech. These guidelines protect 80 to 90 percent of the exposed workers from noise-induced hearing handicaps.\*\* Table 6 indicates some recommended occupational noise exposure levels.

The previous table is based on data which indicates that an eight hour per day continuous exposure to levels below 90 dB(A), over a period of many years, will not produce a noise-induced hearing handicap in 80 to 90 percent of the exposed population. The data is based primarily on studies of temporary threshold shifts, which indicate

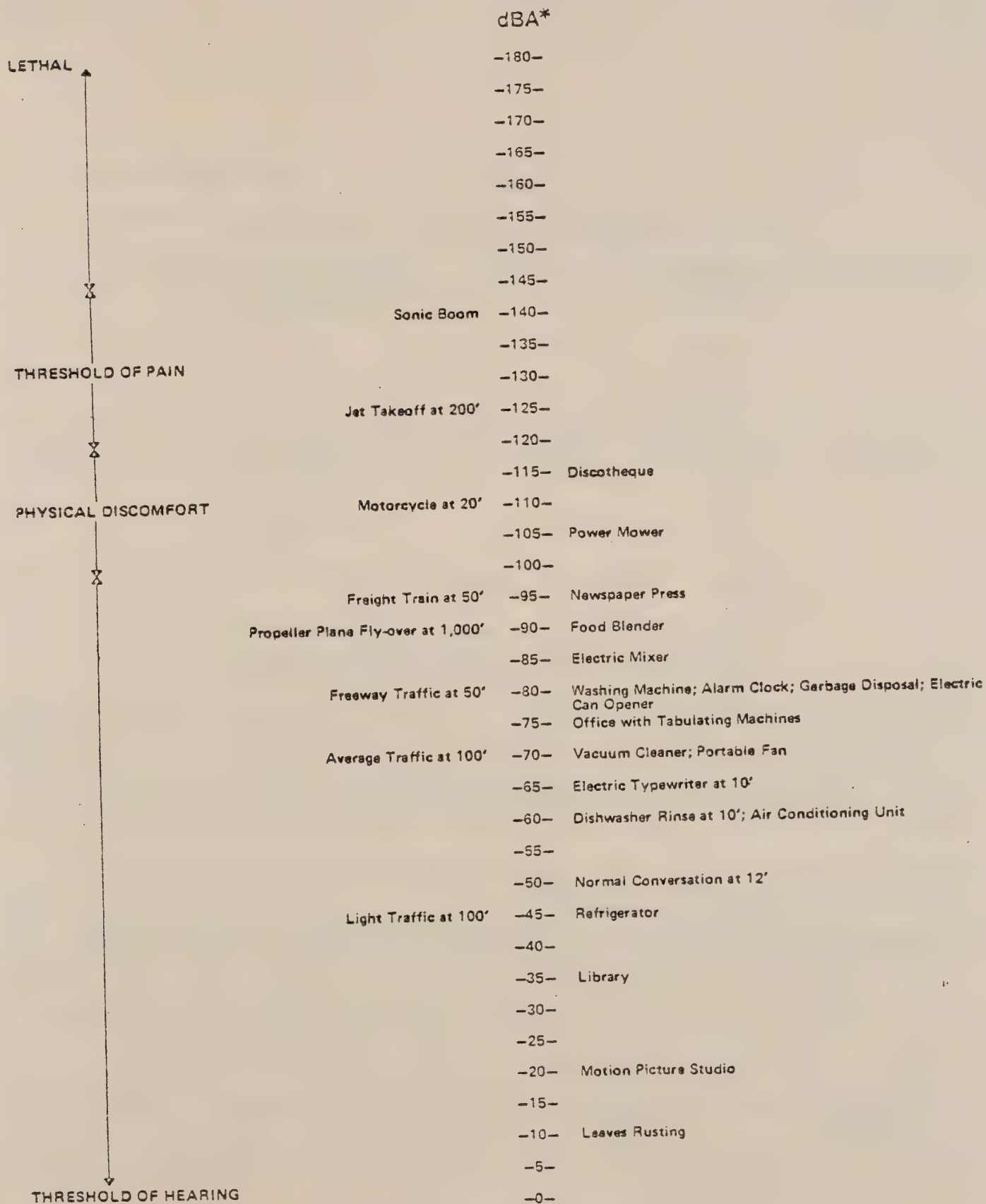
\* U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations from Report to the President and Congress on Noise, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., December 31, 1971, p. 2.

\*\* U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Fundamentals of Noise: Measurement, Rating Schemes and Standards, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., December 21, 1971, p. 18.



FIGURE

## ACOUSTICAL SCALE



\* The unit of sound is the decibel (dB). The loudness of sound is typically measured using a sound meter, the A-Scale of which corresponds closely to the way the human ear perceives sound.<sup>2</sup> Thus the sound level for noise evaluations is frequently expressed in dBA.

TABLE 6

Maximum Recommended Occupational Noise Exposure

<u>Sound Level</u> <u>dB(A)</u>	<u>Daily Exposure</u> <u>Time Hours</u>
90	8
92*	6*
95	4
97*	3*
100	2
102*	1- $\frac{1}{2}$ *
105	1
110	$\frac{1}{2}$
115	$\frac{1}{2}$ or less

Source: City of Los Angeles.

- \* These values are not explicitly given in the occupational noise exposure guidelines, but are consistent therewith and are in present Federal regulations.

that for each halving of time of noise exposure per day, the noise level may be increased five decibels without increasing the hazard of hearing impairment.

According to citations in the Los Angeles County Preliminary Noise Element, the physiological effects of noise indicate:

Exposure to sufficient levels of noise for long periods of time can produce temporary or permanent loss of hearing. In general, sound levels must exceed 80 dB(A) for sustained periods before hearing loss occurs. The greater or longer the exposure, the greater the potential for hearing loss. Other physical effects of noise may be rapid heart beat, blood vessel constriction, dilation of the pupils, paling of the skin, headaches, muscle tension, nausea, insomnia, and fatigue. If the noise is of sufficient level, the stomach, esophagus and intestines may be seized by spasms.\*

\* Los Angeles County Preliminary Noise Element, page 20.



#### 5.4. Environmental Impacts.\*

##### 5.4.1. Introduction.

This section analyzes the environmental impacts that would occur if the Noise Element were adopted and if the recommendations in it were implemented.

##### 5.4.2. General: None.

##### 5.4.3. Soils, Topography, and Geology.

It is possible that there would be a slight impact on landform if soundwalls were developed to muffle and, therefore, mitigate against certain noises or specific noise sources in certain areas.

##### 5.4.4. Drainage and Groundwater.

Soundwalls could affect surface drainage.

##### 5.4.5. Geologic Resources: None.

##### 5.4.6. Vegetation and Wildlife.

The walls might affect adjacent vegetation which would be located within the walls' shadows by casting new shadows or reflecting sun. In general, plants, especially ornamentals, can cope with this. However, some older species may be adversely impacted. Assuming a wall were placed along segments of the north side of Santa Monica Boulevard, the problem might have greater significance in the well established Beverly Gardens.

Depending upon their locations, soundwalls might present barriers to undomesticated animals moving around Beverly Hills as freely as before. However, it is unlikely that soundwalls would be constructed to any extent in areas of the City used for such migration; and there is so little migration that this impact is not considered significant.

##### 5.4.7. Historic and Archaeologic Sites: None.

##### 5.4.8. Climate.

The microclimate would be affected in a minimal manner because of the construction of soundwalls. Air currents might be modified immediately next to the wall; sun and heat would be reflected from the wall, etc. The impact should affect a minimal area.

\* The numerical format of this section and of Section 5.5. follows that of the Environmental Setting Report. The purpose of this is to facilitate joint use of the documents.

5.4.9. Air Quality: None.

5.4.10. Noise.

Ambient noise levels and specific noise sources would be mitigated. The Element is specifically concerned with lowering ambient noises along major streets and with lowering the noises emitted by vehicles, including autos, busses, and trucks.

5.4.11. Community Services.

The Element suggests reevaluation of the need for warbling sirens. These sirens are more easily heard by people; therefore, their elimination could impact service by resulting in lowering the speed of emergency vehicles or by increasing the probability of accidents by decreasing the sound level of the warning signal.

5.4.12. Utilities: None.

5.4.13. Traffic and Circulation.

The Element proposes that vehicular through traffic be discouraged from using residential streets. The goal of this is to protect the sanctity of residential areas, and thereby make it more easy to deal with them. This proposal is designed to significantly alter the north-south traffic patterns in Beverly Hills, especially those south of Santa Monica Boulevard; it would channel through traffic onto major streets by removing through traffic from residential neighborhoods. East-west traffic patterns would probably not be greatly affected: Because of existing land uses, major east-west traffic flows are being funneled through constructed areas. Due to the location of the Wilshire and Hillcrest Country Clubs and Century City, east-west traffic is already confined to a relatively few number of streets.

5.4.14. Land Use.

If used extensively (which does not appear likely in Beverly Hills), land uses could be bordered by the development of a system of "soundwalls." That is, residential areas would be more clearly defined; commercial areas would be "outlined." This would especially be true if through traffic were precluded from traveling various areas and "soundwalls" were constructed in the cul-de-sacs.

5.4.15. Demographic Characteristics.

None. See Growth-Inducing Impacts, Section 10.

5.4.16. Economic/Financial.

The costs of implementing the proposals would have to be considered. Some costs would be direct, such as the construction of "sound barriers." Others could be indirect, e.g., the use of available Federal funds for the construction of "sound barriers." Other indirect costs include those for police to enforce the noise ordinances and for staff to monitor noises and to update the Element as necessary.



#### 5.4.17. Aesthetic/Design.

The Design of the City would be affected by the addition of the "soundwalls": a new visual element would exist in Beverly Hills. If vines were planted and appropriate colors used, and if soundwalls were integrated into the design of other structures, the visual impact could be minimal. Nevertheless, soundwalls could have an adverse aesthetic impact if uncontrolled.

The "walls" would not alter the basic design character of either the City or of any area within it. They could, however, affect the "design" of the City as viewed from certain streets. For example, if walls were placed along Santa Monica Boulevard east of Rexford Drive, the driver's perception of Beverly Hills would be very different than it is now.

#### 5.5. Mitigation Measure Proposed to Minimize the Impact.

##### 5.5.1. Introduction: None.

##### 5.5.2. General: None.

##### 5.5.3. Soils, Topography, and Geology.

The impact of the "soundwalls" could be mitigated with plants such as vines and good design, including appropriate colors. Vines would lessen the adverse effects of the microclimate. (See Section 5.5.6.)

##### 5.5.4. Drainage and Groundwater.

Proper engineering can easily solve surface drainage problems.

##### 5.5.5. Geologic Resources: None.

##### 5.5.6. Vegetation and Wildlife.

Vegetation factors are discussed in Section 5.5.3. Disruption of wild animal migration pattern is not considered to be significant.

##### 5.5.7. Historic and Archaeologic Sites: None.

##### 5.5.8. Climate.

See Section 5.5.3.

##### 5.5.9. Air Quality: None.

##### 5.5.10. Noise.

The measures proposed would mitigate noise but would not resolve the elimination of them. However, noise could be substantially mitigated if the life-style extant in

Southern California were altered, and there were fewer vehicles driven in and through Beverly Hills. This is unlikely to occur in the foreseeable future. The development of rapid transit or more efficient bus systems, or the continued increase in oil prices, etc., may influence a trend toward more efficient transportation and fewer vehicle miles travelled, which would presumably be supportive of efforts to reduce noise levels.

5.5.11. Community Services.

No mitigation measures exist.

5.5.12. Utilities: None.

5.5.13. Traffic and Circulation: None.

5.5.14. Land Use: None.

5.5.15. Demographic Characteristics: None.

5.5.16. Economic/Financial.

There are no mitigation measures possible.

5.5.17. Aesthetic/Design.

See Section 4.5.3.

5.6. Adverse Environmental Effects Which Cannot Be Avoided if the Element Were Implemented.

5.6.1. Minor Alterations to Landforms Because of the Construction of "Soundwalls."

5.6.2. Restructuring of Vehicular Traffic and Concentrating Noises in Specific Places.

5.6.3. Reevaluation of the Need for Continued Use of "Warbling Sirens."

This might increase the possibility of accidents between service and private vehicles and possibly require decreased speed of service vehicles which might result in reduced levels of service. (The impact would have to be determined at such time as the use of this type of siren is reevaluated.)

5.6.4. A New Microclimate that Could Adversely Affect Nearby Plants and Animal Migration.

(Neither impact is viewed as very significant because of the probable magnitude of the "soundwalls.")

5.6.5. The "Design" of the City Would Be Somewhat Affected by the Presence of the "Soundwalls."

(The impact would depend largely on how sensitively this technique is applied.)



5.7. Alternatives to the Proposed Action.

5.7.1. No project, i.e., no Noise Element.

Adoption of this alternative would place the City in violation of Section 65302(g) of the Government Code and might make Beverly Hills liable to legal sanctions, including mandamus actions and possible injunctions to insure a "proper" Element.

5.7.2. Proposed Noise Element. (As submitted to the City Planning Commission.)

This alternative provides noise level data and analysis, provides programs to improve the City's noise environment, proposes a City policy on noise abatement and mitigation, and insures coordination of noise studies and monitoring of noise levels within Beverly Hills.

5.7.3. Proposition of More Stringent Standards.

More stringent standards than those proposed in Section 5.7.2. might have been considered. In the case of Beverly Hills, this would amount to developing more strict standards on noises emanating from vehicles; and the City is preempted from developing such standards by the Federal and State governments. Even if the City had the authority, it is improbable that Beverly Hills could enforce such noise standards, or do so effectively and efficiently. Despite these factors, the Element does recognize the need for more strict requirements; and it proposes that the City endorse efforts by the U.S. and State governments to take constructive action to mitigate urban noise levels.

5.7.4. Proposition of Less Stringent Standards.

Less stringent standards than those proposed in Section 5.7.2. might have been considered. It is probable that less stringent standards would have had less or no effect upon the noise environment, and that they would not have been able to significantly mitigate noise levels. As a result, this alternative might in fact be equal to the "No Project" Alternative.

5.8. The Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity.

Implementation of this Element would lower noise levels and thus improve the noise environment of the City. In the short run, there could be physical disturbances to landform and the commitment of monies and energy associated with implementing the Element. In the long run, the quality of life, the general state of health, and the information base would be improved.

5.9. Irreversible Environmental Changes Which Would Be Involved in the Proposed Action Should It Be Implemented.

5.9.1. Minor Landform Modifications.

5.9.2. Use of Natural Resources and Energy to Develop Noise Mitigation Measures.

5.9.3. Expenditures of Monies and Labor to Develop the Proposals.

Because these monies and labor are from the same financial sources, development of the proposals implies that other programs might be delayed or preempted.

5.10. Growth-Inducing Impact.

It is improbable that the Noise Element would increase the economic or population size of the City of Beverly Hills. Therefore, no growth-inducing impact is anticipated.

Although implementation of the Noise Element is but one factor to enhance the quality of life, it would be a contributor to the desirability of Beverly Hills as a place to live. This, however, is believed to be a source of the City's stability and not necessarily a growth-inducing impact.



6. APPENDICES.

6.1. Mean Noise Readings.

Site	Mean Noise Readings Taken*			
	Mid-Morning*	Noon*	Rush Hour*	Evening*
Corner of Loma Vista and Arkeil	44	78	59	68
1000 Loma Vista Drive	73	71	72	58
1051 Shadow Hill Way	51	67	57	49
1100 Coldwater Canyon Drive	61	79	73	72
603 Doheny Road	44	68	65	69
Front Gate of Harold Lloyd Estate	73	78	71	77
714 Maple Drive	55	47	57	42
700 Alta Drive (Driveway)	59	40	63	36
641 North Doheny Drive	77	77	76	57
632 North Oakhurst Drive	69	69	66	49
726 Alpine Drive (Driveway)	63	47	55	40
Corner of Raxford Drive and Lexington Road	52	70	75	61
629 North Maple Drive	59	47	63	42
615 North Palm Drive	62	40	71	39
601 Alta Drive (Driveway)	59	40	60	33
601 Hillcrest Drive	64	63	69	50
915 Bedford Drive	52	71	73	65
809 North Rodeo Drive	77	79	75	74
Beverly Terrace	72	75	74	70
703 North Alpine Drive (Elavado Side)	65	67	64	46
632 North Crescent Drive (Elavado Side)	67	67	63	44
816 North Bedford Drive	75	76	71	75
808 North Bedford Drive	73	70	60	51
628 North Canon Drive	74	75	73	56
627 North Canon Drive	70	67	63	48
600 North Alpine Drive (Alleyway)	68	69	64	51
518 North Maple Drive	61	47	64	39
624 North Beverly Drive	77	76	74	55
420 Palm Drive	70	71	76	74
405 North Maple Drive	57	60	63	51
715 North Bedford Drive	74	76	57	49
627 North Rodeo Drive (Elavado Side)	67	71	63	45
613 North Bedford Drive	74	56	72	64
314 Burton Way	73	72	73	66
722 Walden Drive	60	56	65	54
525 North Bedford Drive	75	60	72	65
515 North Bedford Drive	75	60	71	64
701 Walden Drive	56	49	65	46
269 North Raxford Drive	66	70	69	67
218 Footchill Road	63	68	65	50
233 Swall Drive	52	57	52	50
505 North Bedford Drive	77	74	73	76
700 North Whittier Drive	63	62	72	59
602 North Whittier Drive	65	65	71	67
270 North Canon Drive	72	79	74	76
401 North Bedford Drive	74	74	73	60
147 Arnaz Drive	50	57	57	59
The Fountain	71	71	76	71
9667 Wilshire Boulevard	76	77	78	70
9060 Wilshire Boulevard	77	77	76	73
Robinson Parking Loc	73	73	79	73
139 South Bedford Drive	63	63	63	54
201 South Bedford Drive	68	62	71	59
8300 Wilshire Boulevard	71	76	76	75
9973 Durant Drive	65	66	71	66
235 South Bedford Drive	55	62	64	48
236 South Canon Drive	71	66	61	49
236 Wetherly Drive	65	62	56	51
250 La Cienega Boulevard	76	73	79	70
226 Tower Drive	54	59	61	52
9955 Young Drive	62	63	67	52
267 South Bedford Drive	66	59	72	54
325 South Bedford Drive	59	54	66	51
9700 Olympic Boulevard	75	73	76	71
9626 Olympic Boulevard	74	76	76	71
9460 Olympic Boulevard	72	74	79	70
432 Spalding Drive	57	65	65	50
452 South Bedford Drive	56	62	59	49
499 Spalding Drive	63	63	62	50

\* All readings are in dB(A)s. Time periods defined by actual hours. See Section 3.2.

Source: Beverly Hills Department of City Planning, January, 1973.

N.3. The data is presented in a general north-south order.

6.2. Comments Received on Draft Environmental Impact Report: None.





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J.M. Stuchen

City Manager

George E. Morgan

Planning Commission

Edward I. Brown, Chairman  
Winston Miller, Vice Chairman  
Donald DeWitt  
Stanley A. Furman  
Thomas R. Vreeland, Jr.

Department of Planning

Irwin Moss Kaplan, Director of Planning  
Peter Melczer, Principal Planner  
Nicholas T. Romaniello, Principal Planner  
Cynthia R. Grace, Associate Planner  
Robert A. Sherwin, Assistant Planner  
Lawrence J. Jaffy, Assistant Planner  
John Prior, Assistant Planner



